592 602 868 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen, funeral priests and barbers, among whom all tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 602 828 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief that men of a taravad resemble each other in character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold, and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men;
● [827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 602 671 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin all karanavans are legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members [67] once a year. However,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding [601] the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and [564] girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. How- [595] ever, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

562 Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men..

769 Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

*141 *564 *Face.*—Supraciliary arches prominent in two. Face of one distinctly pyramidal; in two others it was rather so. In one the broadest part of the head was immediately behind the ears, low down.

Figure.—Fifteen are noted slight, four as slight to medium, five as medium. Two were marked as powerfully built.

142 302 *564 *Hair.*—An oval patch of hair on the vertex remains; the rest of the head, the face and body are always shaved. A moustache is never worn. The men are always clean shaven except during mourning for a near relative, when the razor is not used for a year. The hair on the vertex is allowed to grow long, and well treated with oil, looks glossy and black, is tied in a knot which hangs over the forehead or to one side of the head at the pleasure of the wearer. As a rule the hair on the head is plentiful and wavy, while in a few it is very thick. About 20 per cent. of those examined had scanty hair on the head. The following facts were recorded:—

*142 *564 A man of 50 had a few gray hairs.

A man of 49 had hair distinctly gray: on the face, white when sprouting.

A man of 52 had a few white hairs on the sternum; not on the head.

Baldness is uncommon; and, though old age does not overtake them too early, it has been noted that one man of 40 looked about 60.

[302] Gingelly oil is commonly used for the hair, but its use for the hair is said by some to have certain effects on the body. One man said he used cocoanut oil because, if he used the other, he would get boils all over his body and suffer from headaches. It is usual to oil the head [827] profusely during the month Karkadagam * "in order to cool the body."

Hair on the chest and arms.—As a rule the growth is slight to very slight in 14 out of 25, while in the remaining 11 it is moderate.

On the legs.—In 20 per cent. it was slight; in the rest moderate or thick.

* [564] [302] [305] *Note.*—Men never shave themselves. With the exception of the oval patch on the crown of the head, about 7½ inches long and 5½ inches wide where the hair is allowed to grow long, all hair on the head, face, chest, abdomen, armpits, wrists and about the pubes is shaved by the barber. The back is not shaved, nor the legs: the arms sometimes, but not always. A few do not shave the chest.

* During the rains.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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875 526 [827] [564] [553] The month Karkkatakam, when the Malayalis say "the body is cool," is the time when, according to custom, the Nâyar youths practise physical exercises. At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in August 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct 'Kurup' to his name it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers 875 526 564 of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and when they are believed to be properly accomplished they are given the honorific 'Kurup.' So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amshom (a local area, a small [844] county): and his women folk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar women of the amshom. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He and some of his pupils gave an exhibition of their quality.

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Besides bodily contortions and somersaults (practised in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor) there is play with the following instruments:—"Waṭṭa" (as in the illustration) "cheruvadi," a short stick, and a stick like a quarter staff called a sarîravadi—"stick the length of one's body." The waṭṭa is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way turn over an opponent. The total length of the waṭṭa is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends and is but a short staff.

It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sarîravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands; the distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one now by another end by either hand as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the waṭṭa and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship when the Nâyars were the

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *tarawād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

Again, in all the groups studied the *tarawād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *tarawād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pedhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *amar*.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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or *bhavanam*, while the man in authority dwells in an *idam*, and the Raja in a *kovilakam* or *kottaram*. A separate name for each *tarawad* or family is peculiar to this coast. 342 564

There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality. [1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas: and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramraz's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-23.